

**CLAIM AMENDMENTS**

1. (Currently amended) Device for preventing and extinguishing fires in a closed spatial area or in closed sections of a divisible spatial area (1) (referred to in the following as “target area”), having a buffer reservoir (2) in which oxygen-displacing gas (3) is stored under high pressure, at least one supply line system (4) which in each case connects at least one respective extinguishing nozzle (5) with said buffer reservoir (2) by means of a pressure reducing valve (6), and a controller (7) for controlling said pressure reducing valve (6) in order to introduce the oxygen-displacing gas (3) into target area (1) gradually as needed, or instantly in the event of fire, wherein one or more inert-rendered levels of reduced oxygen content in comparison to the natural state can be set in target area (1),  
~~characterized in that wherein said~~  
buffer reservoir (2) is configured as a high-pressure pipe (8) having a compressive strength of  $\geq 200$  bar, whereby each head section (12) of high-pressure pipe (8) has a connection (13) to the respective supply line system (4).

2. (Canceled) Device in accordance with claim 1,  
characterized in that  
high-pressure pipe (8) consists of a fiber-reinforced composite.

3. (Canceled) Device in accordance with claim 2,

characterized in that

high-pressure pipe (8) has a pressure capacity of 300 to 700 bar.

4. (Canceled) Device in accordance with one of claims 1-3,

characterized in that

buffer reservoir (2) and supply line system (4) are arranged as a compact module either in target area (1) itself or directly adjacent target area (1).

5. (Canceled) Device in accordance with one of the preceding claims,

characterized in that

buffer reservoir (2) further comprises at least one mechanism (9) for filling or refilling said buffer reservoir (2) with oxygen-displacing gas (3).

6. (Canceled) Device in accordance with claim 5,

characterized in that

a gas generator (10) is provided to build up the oxygen-displacing gas (3) stored in buffer reservoir (2) which is connected to buffer reservoir (2) by means of mechanism (9).

7. (Canceled) Device in accordance with one of the preceding claims,

characterized in that

controller (7) is further provided with an oxygen sensor (11) to measure the

oxygen content in target area (1) and regulate the amount of extinguishing agent to be fed into target area (1).

8. (Canceled) Device in accordance with one of the preceding claims, characterized in that controller (7) is further provided with a fire detection device, in particular an aspirative fire detection device.

9. (Canceled) Device in accordance with one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the oxygen-displacing gas (3) is a pure inert gas or a mixture of inert gases.

10. (Canceled) Use of a device in accordance with one or more of claims 1-9 in a tunnel.

11. (New) Device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said high-pressure pipe consists of a fiber-reinforced composite.

12. (New) Device in accordance with claim 11, wherein said high-pressure pipe has a pressure capacity of 300 to 700 bar.

13. (New) Device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said buffer reservoir and supply line system are arranged as a compact module either in target area itself or directly adjacent target area.

14. (New) Device in accordance with claim 11, wherein said buffer reservoir and supply line system are arranged as a compact module either in target area itself or directly adjacent target area.

15. (New) Device in accordance with claim 12, wherein said buffer reservoir and supply line system are arranged as a compact module either in target area itself or directly adjacent target area.

16. (New) Device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said buffer reservoir further comprises at least one mechanism for filling or refilling said buffer reservoir with oxygen-displacing gas.

17. (New) Device in accordance with claim 11, wherein said buffer reservoir further comprises at least one mechanism for filling or refilling said buffer reservoir with oxygen-displacing gas.

18. (New) Device in accordance with claim 12, wherein said buffer reservoir further comprises at least one mechanism for filling or refilling said buffer reservoir with oxygen-displacing gas.

19. (New) Device in accordance with claim 13, wherein said buffer reservoir further comprises at least one mechanism for filling or refilling said buffer reservoir with oxygen-displacing gas.

20. (New) Device in accordance with claim 16, wherein a gas generator is provided to build up the oxygen-displacing gas stored in buffer reservoir which is connected to buffer reservoir by means of mechanism.

21. (New) Device in accordance with claim 17, wherein a gas generator is provided to build up the oxygen-displacing gas stored in buffer reservoir which is connected to buffer reservoir by means of mechanism.

22. (New) Device in accordance with claim 18, wherein a gas generator is provided to build up the oxygen-displacing gas stored in buffer reservoir which is connected to buffer reservoir by means of mechanism.

23. (New) Device in accordance with claim 19, wherein a gas generator is provided to build up the oxygen-displacing gas stored in buffer reservoir which is connected to buffer reservoir by means of mechanism.

24. (New) Device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said controller is further provided with an oxygen sensor to measure the oxygen content in target area and regulate the amount of extinguishing agent to be fed into target area.

25. (New) Device in accordance with claim 11, wherein said controller is further provided with an oxygen sensor to measure the oxygen content in target area and regulate the amount of extinguishing agent to be fed into target area.

26. (New) Device in accordance with claim 13, wherein said controller is further provided with an oxygen sensor to measure the oxygen content in target area and regulate the amount of extinguishing agent to be fed into target area.

27. (New) Device in accordance with claim 16, wherein said controller is further provided with an oxygen sensor to measure the oxygen content in target area and regulate the amount of extinguishing agent to be fed into target area.

28. (New) Device in accordance with claim 20, wherein said controller is further provided with an oxygen sensor to measure the oxygen content in target area and regulate the amount of extinguishing agent to be fed into target area.

29. (New) Device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said controller is further provided with a fire detection device, in particular an aspirative fire detection device.

30. (New) Device in accordance with claim 11, wherein said controller is further provided with a fire detection device, in particular an aspirative fire detection device.

31. (New) Device in accordance with claim 13, wherein said controller is further provided with a fire detection device, in particular an aspirative fire detection device.

32. (New) Device in accordance with claim 16, wherein said controller is further provided with a fire detection device, in particular an aspirative fire detection device.

33. (New) Device in accordance with claim 20, wherein said controller is further provided with a fire detection device, in particular an aspirative fire detection device.

34. (New) Device in accordance with claim 24, wherein said controller is further provided with a fire detection device, in particular an aspirative fire detection device.

35. (New) Device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said oxygen-displacing gas is a pure inert gas or a mixture of inert gases.

36. (New) Device in accordance with claim 11, wherein said oxygen-displacing gas is a pure inert gas or a mixture of inert gases.

37. (New) Device in accordance with claim 13, wherein said oxygen-displacing gas is a pure inert gas or a mixture of inert gases.

38. (New) Device in accordance with claim 16, wherein said oxygen-displacing gas is a pure inert gas or a mixture of inert gases.

39. (New) Device in accordance with claim 20, wherein said oxygen-displacing gas is a pure inert gas or a mixture of inert gases.



40. (New) Device in accordance with claim 24, wherein said oxygen-displacing gas is a pure inert gas or a mixture of inert gases.

41. (New) Device in accordance with claim 29, wherein said oxygen-displacing gas is a pure inert gas or a mixture of inert gases.

42. (New) Use of a device in accordance with claim 1 or any of claims 11 to 41 in a tunnel.